

Obituary

Charles Herbert Dixon

Bertie Dixon who was born on the 2nd of May 1890, sadly died on the 10th March 1982. He farmed at Micheldever, Hants for most of his working life, and entomology took up the greater part of his spare time. His fine collection of British moths containing many rare and interesting species, including a remarkable drawer displaying parasites bred from doomed larvae and pupae, has been presented to the Hampshire County Museum. His collecting was concentrated on the Macrolepidoptera of the British Isles including Eire. He kept meticulous diary records of all specimens taken for his collection, as well as daily recordings of species found in his M.V. trap at Micheldever, and these records will also be held by the Museum.

A feature of his lifetime's work in entomology was the authenticity of his material: his collection contains only specimens which he himself had caught or reared, and was formed with scrupulous care and accuracy. Much of his collecting was carried out in the company of his great friends the late R. C. Edwards and Baron de Worms, and his work was often mentioned in the latter's reports in *The Record*, and he also made a substantial contribution to Goater's *The Butterflies and Moths of Hampshire and Isle of Wight*, in which he recorded for V.C.12. He was an inspiration to my sons and myself, as in recent years he imparted to us some of his great knowledge, and we shall greatly miss his advice and expert eye on our own entomological activities. — David Owen.

Notes and Observations

PALPIFER SEXNOTATUS MOORE (LEP.: HEPIALIDAE) IN BRITAIN. — In January 1981, three tubers of the arum lily *Arisaema speciosa* were procured from a Kent plant merchant. One of these did not develop and was found to contain a larva of the above species, which spun up at the beginning of May to produce an imago at the end of the month. The larva as first seen was 15mm long, with shape similar to that of a fully fed Tortricid larva, and of a greyish-white colour with pink suffusion and pale brown chitinous mouth parts. When about full grown, the larva was 55mm in length and similar in appearance to that of *Hepialus humli* L., except for the colour since it still retained its pink suffusion. Due to shortage of the original pabulum, the larva was transferred to tubers of *Arum maculatum* and finally Desiree potato. Prior to pupation, the larva formed a substantial cocoon of yellow silk 50mm long which was located vertically in the soil. The top of the cocoon was sealed with a few strands of silk just below the surface, and consisted of a tube 10mm long and 5mm in diameter, which led to a gradually widening pupal chamber of maximum diameter 9mm. At emergence time the pupa worked its way to the surface of the soil, so that the final segments alone remained within the cocoon.

A. speciosa occurs in the temperate Himalayas and the plant merchants advised me that the tubers were imported to Britain from India via Holland. As the plant is nearly hardy in southern Britain and popular with gardeners, further records of *P. sexnotatus* might be expected in the future. Record cards in the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) indicate that the type specimen of *P. sexnotata* came from Darjeeling, and the B. M. collection includes specimens from several parts of India. My thanks are due to Dr. Gaden Robinson and Dr. John Bradley for their help in identifying this insect and providing access to the relevant museum records. Ref.: *R. H. S. Dictionary of Gardening*, vol. 1, 2nd edn., 1956. — P. J. BAKER, Mount Vale, The Drive, Virginia Water, Surrey.

LAGIA ATRIPES MULS. & GUIL. (COL.) IN THE NEW FOREST, ETC. — There seem to have been but few references to this beetle in our literature since it was added to our list by me in 1948 (*Ent. mon. Mag.*, 84: 287); the only one I have seen being in Buck, 1954, *Handb. Ident. Brit. Ins.*, 5 (9) : 3, where its differences from the common *L. hirta* L. are clearly set forth. (At the time of my record I had not seen the male.) *L. atripes* is now known to occur in a second East Kent locality — Ham Street Woods, where my late friend A. M. Masee first took it — besides the original one, Blean Woods. There are also two previously unpublished records for the New Forest, Hants., mentioned by Buck (*l.c.*) on my authority but without details, to which I would now draw attention. They were communicated by Dr. Masee and relate to a ♀ taken by him in New Park Inclosure, 27.v.38, and a ♂ by the late H. W. Daltry in Wilverley Inclosure, 3.vi.36. Both must previously have passed as large examples of *hirta*. The existence of the rarer species in Hampshire in the decade before it turned up in E. Kent is of interest in making the hypothesis of a recent arrival from the Continent far less likely than might have appeared originally.

In the year after bringing forward the species I received an interesting letter from Mr. Angus Fraser of Tankerton, near Whitstable, in which he reported having taken both sexes of *atripes* recently, not only at Blean but also at Tankerton, on the sea front on open waste ground, some 4 miles north of Blean. (There is no question here of mistaken identity, as the rest of the letter amply proves.) This last capture seems very strange for an insect that otherwise gives every indication of being an inhabitant of woodland; and unless others were noted there subsequently, affording evidence of breeding on the spot, I think they must be regarded as stragglers "out of their element". Almost certainly, by now, the beetle occurs in other E. Kent woods besides the two already noted. — A. A. ALLEN.

LARVAE OF ANARTA MYRTILLI L.: BEAUTIFUL YELLOW UNDERWING (LEP.: NOCTUIDAE) AND AN ADULT BOREUS HYEMALIS L. (NEUROPT.: BOREIIDAE) ON WINTER SNOW IN THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS. — During spring and summer months, the finding of insects on high altitude snow is a fairly regular occurrence both in the Scottish mountains and the Alps, though little has been written on the subject (see Masutti, L., 1979, *Insetti e nevi stagionale. Riflessioni su reperti relativi alle Alpi Carniche e Giulie.*